

**2008 AP[®] ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION
FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS (Form B)**

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)

Directions: The following prompt is based on the accompanying six sources.

This question requires you to synthesize a variety of sources into a coherent, well-written essay. When you synthesize sources you refer to them to develop your position and cite them accurately. *Your argument should be central; the sources should support this argument. Avoid merely summarizing the sources.*

Remember to attribute both direct and indirect citations.

Introduction

Some nations have a defined national school curriculum, while others, such as the United States, do not. As a result, students in high school English classes in the United States can read texts that vary widely from school to school, while students in other countries may all read the same books in high school.

Assignment

Read the following sources (including the introductory information) carefully. **Then write an essay that develops a position on whether or not there should be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. Synthesize at least three of the sources for support.**

You may refer to the sources by their titles (Source A, Source B, etc.) or by the descriptions in the parentheses.

- Source A (Landow)
- Source B (Table)
- Source C (Greer)
- Source D (Book cover)
- Source E (Pirofski)
- Source F (Fowler)

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Source A

Landow, George P. "The Literary Canon." The Victorian Web. 3 Sept. 2004
<<http://www.victorianweb.org/victorian/canon/litcanon.html>>.

The following excerpt is from an online reference source.

The American Heritage Dictionary has eleven separate definitions of the term **canon**, the most relevant of which is "an authoritative list, as of the works of an author" and "a basis for judgment; standard; criterion." . . . To enter the canon, or more properly, to be entered into the canon is to gain certain obvious privileges. The gatekeepers of the fortress of high culture include influential critics, museum directors and their boards of trustees, and far more lowly scholars and teachers. Indeed, a chief enforcer of the canon appears in middlebrow anthologies, those hangers on of high culture that in the Victorian period took the form of pop anthologies like **Golden Treasury** and today that of major college anthologies in America. To appear in the Norton or Oxford anthology is to have achieved, not exactly greatness but what is more important, certainly—status and accessibility to a reading public. And that is why, of course, it matters that so few women writers have managed to gain entrance to such anthologies.

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Source B

Table adapted from a 1992 publication of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE).

The following table is based on data gathered from schools in the United States.

**Table 1
Most Frequently Required Titles, Grades 9–12
Title and Percent of Schools**

Public (non-tuition-charging) Schools		Independent (tuition-charging) Schools	
Romeo and Juliet	84%	Macbeth	74%
Macbeth	81	Romeo and Juliet	66
Huckleberry Finn	70	Huckleberry Finn	56
Julius Caesar	70	Scarlet Letter	52
To Kill a Mockingbird	69	Hamlet	51
Scarlet Letter	62	Great Gatsby	49
Of Mice and Men	56	To Kill a Mockingbird	47*
Hamlet	55	Julius Caesar	42*
Great Gatsby	54	Odyssey	39
Lord of the Flies	54	Lord of the Flies	34

*Percentage significantly different from public school sample, $p < .05$.

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Source C

Greer, Michael. "New NCTE Book Stirs Debate on Poetry Canon." *The Council Chronicle* Feb. 1996.

The following excerpt is taken from an academic journal.

Clayton Eshleman, who edits the poetry journal *Sulfur* and teaches English at Eastern Michigan University, agrees with . . . criticism of the major anthologies, arguing that . . . "teachers have to make their own decisions" about what to include in an introductory poetry course, and that they "can't trust anthologies" to answer students' questions about the nature and significance of poetry.

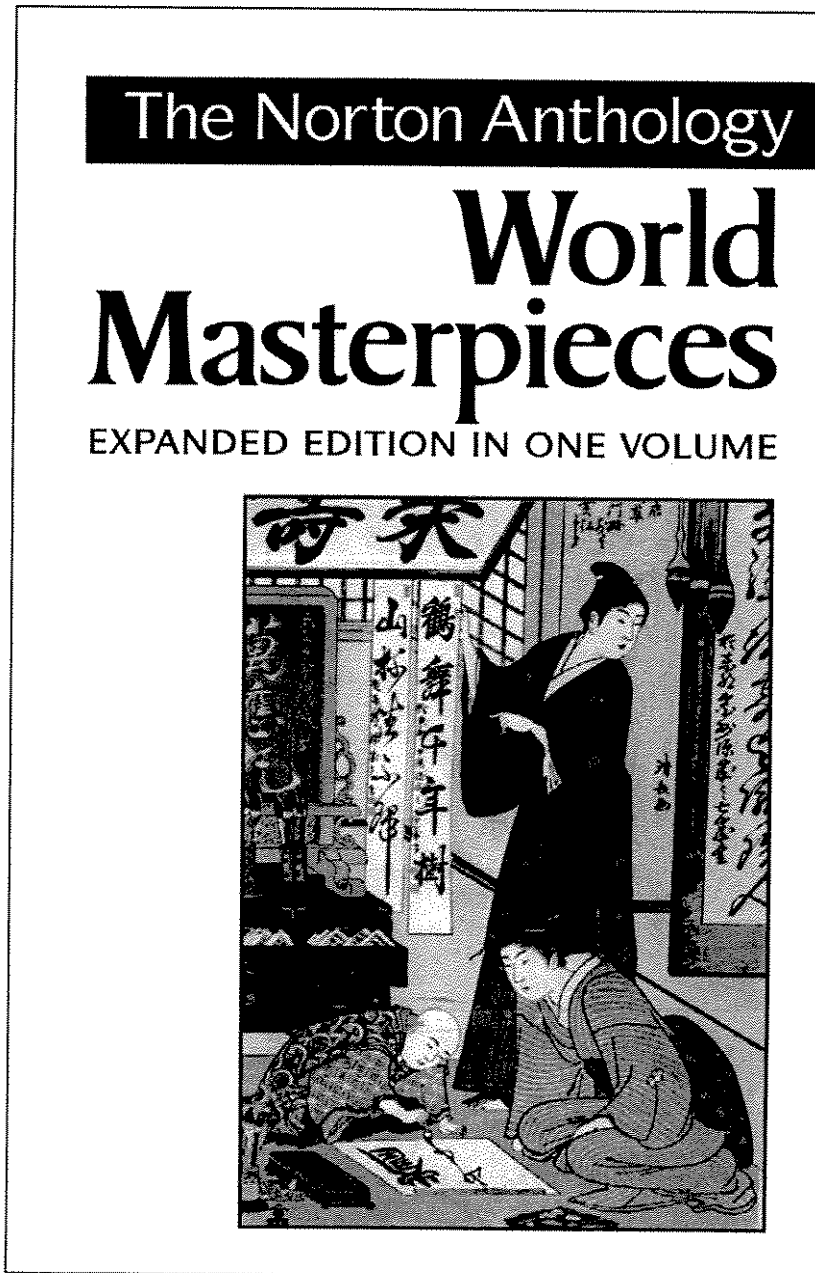
Eshleman's strategy is to teach anthologies alongside other poems—sometimes by the same poets—that the editor(s) chose not to include. In one instance, he provided his class with portions of Whitman's "Song of Myself" that had been edited out of a particular anthology. Because the passages in question (which Eshleman had to photocopy and provide to the class in handout form) were highly charged with homoerotic energy and sexual imagery, the discussion shifted to the question of what subject matter was "appropriate" in poetry and why a particular editor might have chosen a small selection as "representative" of Whitman's work.

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Source D

Mack, Maynard, ed. The Norton Anthology: World Masterpieces. New York: Norton, 1999.

The following is the cover of a widely used literature textbook.



Torii Kiyonaga, Shigeyuki Executing Calligraphy, Philadelphia Museum of Art: Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 1946

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Source E

Pirofski, Kira Isak. "Multicultural Literature and the Children's Literary Canon." 23 Oct. 2006
<<http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/papers/literature.html>>.

The following is taken from an online article about using multicultural literature in the classroom.

This paper presents an historical overview of research and reading programs which have found that multicultural literature is a valuable learning tool as well as research which documents the longstanding lack of multicultural literature in the children's literature. Reasons for the exclusion of culturally authentic reading materials in the canon are discussed as well.

Pioneer researcher, Florez-Tighe (1983), was one of the first educators to advocate the use of multicultural literature in school curriculum. Her research indicated that culturally authentic children's literature enhances language development and thought processes of African-American children (Florez-Tighe, 1983). Florez-Tighe (1983) believes that use of African-American folktales by teachers in the classroom can teach respect for African-American culture and affirm a child's feeling of self worth (Florez-Tighe, 1983).

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Source F

Fowler, Robert M. "The Fate of the Notion of the Canon in the Electronic Age." *Forum* 9 (1993).

The following is the introduction to a discussion about how reading changes when it occurs online.

What happens when text moves from page to screen? First, the digital text becomes unfixed and interactive. The reader can change it, become writer. The center of Western culture since the Renaissance—really since the great Alexandrian editors of Homer—the fixed, authoritative, canonical text, simply explodes into the ether. (Lanham, *The Electronic Word*, 31)

In the world of electronic writing, there will be no texts that everyone must read. There will only be texts that more or fewer readers choose to examine in more or less detail. The idea of the great, inescapable book belongs to the age of print that is now passing. (Bolter, *Writing Space*, 240)

The idea of a relatively stable [literary] canon made sense in a culture dominated by printed books. The canon was also appropriate to a centralized educational system, in which everyone studied the same subjects and the same texts in order to be introduced into the standards of cultural life. But the notion of a standard has now collapsed, and the collapse is mirrored in the shift from the printed to the electronic writing space, in which a stable canon of works and authors is meaningless. (Bolter, *Writing Space*, 237)

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2008 SCORING GUIDELINES (Form B)

Question 1

The score should reflect a judgment of the essay's quality as a whole. Remember that students had only 15 minutes to read the sources and 40 minutes to write; therefore, the essay is not a finished product and should not be judged by standards that are appropriate for an out-of-class assignment. Evaluate the essay as a draft, making certain to reward students for what they do well.

All essays, even those scored 8 or 9, may contain occasional flaws in analysis, prose style, or mechanics. Such features should enter into the holistic evaluation of an essay's overall quality. In no case may an essay with many distracting errors in grammar and mechanics be scored higher than a 2.

- 9 Essays earning a score of 9 meet the criteria for 8 essays and, in addition, are especially sophisticated in their argument, skillful in their synthesis of sources, or impressive in their control of language.

8 Effective

Essays earning a score of 8 **effectively** develop a position on whether or not there should be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. They support their position by successfully synthesizing* at least three of the sources. The argument is convincing, and the student uses the sources effectively to develop a position. The prose demonstrates an ability to control a wide range of the elements of effective writing but is not necessarily flawless.

- 7 Essays earning a score of 7 fit the description of 6 essays but are distinguished by more complete or more purposeful argumentation and synthesis of sources or a more mature prose style.

6 Adequate

Essays earning a score of 6 **adequately** develop a position on whether or not there should be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. They synthesize at least three of the sources. The student's argument is generally convincing, and the student generally uses the sources to support a position, but the argument is less developed or less cogent than the arguments of essays earning higher scores. The language may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but generally the prose is clear.

- 5 Essays earning a score of 5 develop a position on whether or not there should be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. They develop the position by synthesizing at least three sources, but their arguments and their use of sources are somewhat limited, inconsistent, or uneven. The argument is generally clear, and the sources generally develop the student's position, but the links between the sources and the argument may be strained. The writing may contain lapses in diction or syntax, but it usually conveys the student's ideas adequately.

*For the purposes of scoring, synthesis refers to combining the sources and the student's position to form a cohesive, supported argument and accurately citing sources.

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Question 1 (continued)

4 Inadequate

Essays earning a score of 4 **inadequately** develop a position on whether or not there should be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. They attempt to present an argument and develop the position by synthesizing at least two sources but may misunderstand, misrepresent, or oversimplify either their own argument or the sources they include. The link between the argument and the sources is weak. The prose of 4 essays may suggest immature control of writing.

- 3** Essays earning a score of 3 meet the criteria for a score of 4 but demonstrate less understanding of the sources, less success in developing their own position, or less control of writing.

2 Little Success

Essays earning a score of 2 demonstrate **little success** in developing a position on whether or not there should be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. They may merely allude to knowledge gained from reading the sources rather than citing the sources themselves. These essays may misread the sources, fail to present an argument, or substitute a simpler task by merely responding to the question tangentially or by simply summarizing the sources. The prose of 2 essays often demonstrates consistent weaknesses in writing, such as a lack of development or organization, grammatical problems, or a lack of control.

- 1** Essays earning a score of 1 meet the criteria for a score of 2 but are especially simplistic or are weak in their control of writing or do not cite even one source.

0 Indicates an on-topic response that receives no credit, such as one that merely repeats the prompt.

— Indicates a blank response or one that is completely off topic.

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

1

I am a product of at least five different educational systems.
 frequently ^{individuals} ~~people~~ ask me if these experiences have harmed my academic
 development and ~~social upbringing~~ and I respond saying "definitely not." As
 Piorefski stated "multicultural" aspects of education are "valuable learning
 tools" for developing children. Therefore, a non-standardized approach
 to education is the most beneficial. I am ^{therefore} against the statement
 that specific texts should be read by all high school English students
 on the grounds that standardization excludes, mainstreams and
 limits high schooler's ^{possibilities} ~~education~~ in a changing world.

Creating a list of specific texts that all high school students must
 read will exclude "greatness" (Lardow). Anthologies and other ^{English} ~~course~~
 related syllabi gate keep many great writers. To be included in
 these standardized guidelines for school curriculums one must
 thank "influential critics" (Lardow) and the like not solely one's
 ability as a writer. These "gatekeepers" (Lardow) ensures a
 writer's acceptance into "high culture" (Lardow). ^{For proof} ~~Proof~~ that
 connections to influential members of the "fortress of high culture"
 versus genuine writing ability ensured literary success ^{consider} ~~think of~~
 how "few women writers" ^{have} managed to gain entrance ^{into} such
 anthologies. "Women have been writing ^{for} as long as men have
 but their socio-personal status has inhibited them for centuries to
 achieve "greatness." Therefore, to have a good school curriculum
 one should not solely pull from the celebrated writers from
 well known standardized ~~ethnology~~ anthologies but one should also
 open one's students' minds to some of the noncelebrated



1

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

1A
2 of 3

talent of non-mainstream writers.

Another negative side effect of standardizing the reading lists of all high school English classes is mainstreaming. To ensure a well-educated young generation entering the world of adulthood at the end of their ^{high school} ~~high school~~ years, one wants ^{capable} independent thinkers that can contribute to society. To generate such a capable group of citizens teachers should avoid mainstreaming and ~~omit~~ "pop anthologies" (Lindow). As Fishbein remarks one "can't trust anthologies." He elaborates by stating "teachers have to make their own decisions" regarding what literary works to include in their English classes. Incorporating a variety of sources guarantees a well constructed knowledge base for a particular piece of literature, with which the student can better understand and analyze the piece. Having drawn from a variety of sources also ensures that not all freshmen English students interpret "Lord of the Flies" the same way and opens the doors for discussion and further intellectual stimulation.

One method by which ^{current high school} students study literature in our global world is via internet. On the computer screen "the digital text becomes unfixed and interactive" (Fowler) for the students. Besides being able to analyze and interactively work with the material online students can also "become a writer" (Fowler) and further their creative abilities in online forums. These activities would not be possible if every student's work



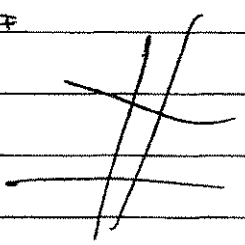
Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

1

and curriculum was identical. There would ~~be not~~ ^{not be a} purpose for discussion if every freshman interpreted the "Lord of the Flies" in the same manner. Therefore, by standardizing the texts all high school English students read one would be limiting the possibilities ^{that the modern age presents} of the modern age. As Fowler states "a relatively stable [literary] canon made sense in a culture dominated by printed books" but in "electronic writing space... a stable canon of works and authors became unworkable" as we as students ^{and} ^{continuously} transform our ~~changing~~ transforming global environment change.

~~Change has to~~
~~To change we had to be open to new ideas and we had~~
~~to do away with standardization. Standardization conforms us~~
~~into one monolithic train of thought and excludes possibilities~~
~~of ^(thought) variations. To enter through one "gatekeeper" (Linda L. Dowd).~~

In a continuously transforming global society standardization inhibits academic progress. The Webbers, Lockes and Marxes of tomorrow can not be formed by a society that seeks success through conformity. A ~~more~~ ^{more} open-minded and intellectually capable generation will result from ~~the~~ ^{of reading requirements} de-standardization and the pursuit of ^{genuine} "greatness" ~~without~~



Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

1

1B
1 of 3

In every ~~school~~^{Sch} there are teachers and students. The two have a distinct relationship and bond that they do not have for others, outside the scholastic society. These teachers know their students. They know what is best for ~~them~~^{their students} and what they will need to teach them in order to advance in life ~~both~~ through ~~career opportunities and~~. They want their students to be successful in both the field in which they want to study, and their ethics; attitudes towards others and about life. Most importantly the teacher knows the student's culture. Every location all over the globe has a distinct culture from the other. Through ~~this~~^{this} understanding it should most definitely be the teacher's decision on what they give their students to read in an English class.

In the class the teachers need to teach their students properly. The term ~~properly~~, refers to different styles of teaching so the student will learn best. The proper way of teaching is different for almost every teacher. As source C states, "teachers have to make their own decisions." They cannot base their schedule on what a single person or group of people have decided is the best ~~and~~ only way to teach ^{an} English class. If you observe the chart in source C you come to notice that the same ~~books~~ titles appear in both Public and Private Schools in the United States. If you observe more intensely you will see that the percent of each book read is almost 20% different than the other school. This is because the teachers know which of the



1

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering 2 of 3 on this page as it is designated in the exam.

books is more appropriate for their students. The students who go to public and private schools are different. ~~there~~ a low and ^{economically} class citizen will attend the public school. And the teacher knows that what he has to learn in their English class is different from what the economically upper class citizen in the private schools is learning. ~~The~~ The few have completely different futures. Set from the minute they were born. The teacher needs to be involved and help each student become successful in life. The two students have different goals, ~~and~~ dreams and ideals. This is why each teacher has to teach to their own ^{curriculum} ~~curriculum~~.

What draws more attention is the students attending English class all over the world. They have their own culture and background. They need to learn ~~at~~ things differently, according to their life style and their home. ~~Here~~ The use of African American folktales by teachers in the class room can teach respect for African American culture (E). "This ~~is~~ ~~most~~ ~~to~~ certainly is true for a ~~some~~ ^{great} ~~to~~ ~~white~~ ~~the~~ racist or segregated view of another person from another culture, and even for the African American who knows nothing about its past and its culture. But what ^{about} the student in ^{Sudan} ~~longo~~ who is taking ~~the~~ English class? He will need to read different articles about different topics than the American student. For example, the teacher in America assigns the reading of Fast Food Nation. This may have a significant impact on the American ~~but~~ because it shows the meticulousness ~~and~~ disgusting detail in making

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

1

a. Steak or hamburger patty that he will eat every other day. But the Sudanese students, surrounded by civil war and it care less about this book. It is more important for him to learn about his culture and background, it will be more important for that Sudanese students sake if he reads a book like What is the What. Where a Sudanese refugee tells his story of survival and his witnesses of massacre and pain. It will give hope to the student. The author of this autobiography had crossed Sudan's hard times and left to through America. difficult he fled to America to start a new life. This story brings hope and what the student may need. The teacher will know this because he knows what is best for the his student. This is why each teacher needs to teach their own way.

b. Overall, you can easily observe why each teacher needs to teach their own content and assign a variety of reading texts to help the student. Each ^{student} person has a different lifestyle and will need to read different texts to help him through life. Each student has a different culture and historical background and will need to read context which teaches him to either be aware of what he eats everyday over something that inspires and gives him hope and confidence. This is why the teacher knows the student. And this is why they cannot all teach the same context in an English class.

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

1C 1 of 2

Question 1

I believe that there should not be specific texts that all students of high school English must read. The purpose of this essay is to give the reader a thoughtful analysis on my position of ~~why~~ why there should not be specific texts. As a student, I have had many ~~different~~ teachers and have observed how each one of them teaches differently. I feel like if make each school read the same books we are limiting both what the students learn and ~~or~~ how ~~or~~ what the teachers teach.

In source B it show a table adapted from a 1992 publication of the National Council of teachers of English. The table consists of the most frequently required titles and their percent from grades 9-12 within the US. The tables also compares Public Schools verses Independent Schools (Private schools). As ~~was~~ observed the table I realized that the types of schools are for the most part on the same page. I don't see the need to limit the schools variety on what they read.



1

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

In ~~Source C~~ Source C H ~~talks~~ ^{talks} about how an editor of the poetry journal *Sulfur*; Clayton Kienle believes that "teachers have to make their own decisions." Sometimes a teacher can pull something out of a book that another teacher cannot and relate it to a certain topic. Why should we ~~take~~ ^{take} that privilege away? "Schelman's strategy is to teach anthologies alongside other poems - sometimes by the same poets - that the editor(s) chose not to include." This is an example of how ~~the~~ teachers can teach out of certain passages and books that others found unneeded.

In today's society more and more students are becoming less interested in school. Why not let the teachers expand their teaching in order to keep the students interested? Our society right now is at a point that the drop out rate in schools are higher than ever. I think its time to think outside the box in order to keep students inside the box.

#

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Question 1

Sample: 1A

Score: 8

The first paragraph of this effective essay has pertinent content (none of the trivially obvious generalizations typical of lower-scoring responses) and personal observation relevant to its thesis. The thesis alludes to issues found in the sources (standardization, exclusion, a changing world) but is not dependent on the language or specific argumentation used in these sources. The language is controlled throughout the essay, which has sophisticated vocabulary and sentence structure. The student's synthesis of sources is effective. Source A (Landow) is examined in terms of wording and specific claims, points that are interspersed with the student's own interpretive statements. The student lingers in discussion of Landow but also explicitly references Eshleman (who is cited by Greer in Source C) and nicely connects the arguments of these two sources. Source B is also implicitly invoked with a mention of "Lord of the Flies" as a canonical work that can be better understood if read in conjunction with nonstandard texts. The discussion of Source F is also effective. The concluding paragraph has an interesting flourish, which goes beyond the main argument of the essay: "The Webers, Lockes and Marxes of tomorrow can not be formed by a society that seeks success through conformity." The concluding sentence is also particularly strong.

Sample: 1B

Score: 5

The opening statement of this essay ("In every school there are teachers and students") is not particularly insightful, but the introductory paragraph is reasonably developed. There is some sophisticated identification of issues from the sources, such as "distinct culture," which informs the student's argument against having a standard reading list. Source C is paraphrased in somewhat specific terms, but the treatment is less thoughtful and less directed toward synthetic argument than in upper-half essays. The third paragraph includes a discussion of the kind of noncanonical source that might be appropriate in the United States (*Fast Food Nation*), which is compared with a noncanonical source appropriate for readers in Sudan (*What Is the What*). This outside information enhances the information provided in Source E and supports the student's thesis. The essay is briefly but inconsistently adequate, which is why it received a score of 5.

Sample: 1C

Score: 2

This unsuccessful essay begins with a trivially true introductory statement—that each teacher "teaches differently." The thesis is a simplistic paraphrase of source positions that offers no real argument. This is followed by descriptions of Source B and Source C that use simplistic language for limited interpretations. The conclusion is based on a claim that students need interesting reading material rather than on any synthesis of the sources.